

Fall 2016

The Bicentennial Celebration of the Vincentians in America: An Exhibition at DePaul University's John T. Richardson Library, 2016

Andrew H. Rea

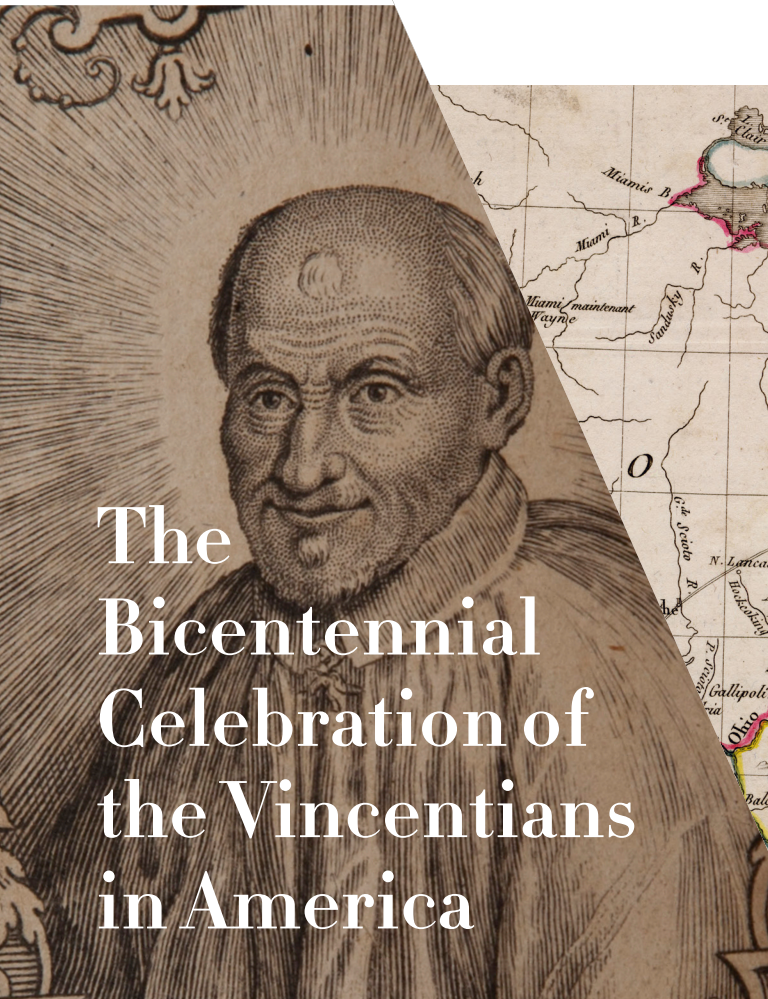
John E. Rybolt C.M.

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A detailed engraving of John T. Richardson, an elderly man with a receding hairline and a goatee, wearing a dark coat and a white cravat. The portrait is set against a background of decorative scrollwork.

The Bicentennial Celebration of the Vincentians in America



Exhibition at DePaul University's
John T. Richardson Library, 2016



Forward

Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M.
President, DePaul University

Two hundred years ago this past July, a ship travelling from Bordeaux approached the inner harbor of Baltimore, Maryland. The long ocean voyage was not without its stormy challenges. Standing on deck, straining for a first glimpse of their new missionary field, was a small band of Vincentian priests and seminarians from Italy. It is not hard to imagine the thoughts that filled their heads, the feelings that filled their hearts, and the faith that filled their souls as the coast slowly came into view. Undoubtedly they wondered what God's providence would have in store for them as they established the works of the Congregation of the Mission in a new world, very different from the old one they had left behind forever.

One of the traditional works of the Congregation of the Mission in the Old World was the education of seminarians. The missionaries assumed they would continue this work meeting the needs of the nascent Church in the United States. They were right. Yet, beyond the need of educating their future priests, the Catholic faithful were also concerned about ensuring the education of their children. Thus, in 1818, as the Congregation founded its first seminary and college in the wilds of the Missouri frontier, it also simultaneously began the education of lay students. From this humble and literal log-cabin foundation of Saint Mary of the Barrens, the American Vincentians began a dedication to higher education that continues to our own day at the three Vincentians universities in the United States: Niagara University founded in 1856 (located in Niagara Falls, New York), St. John's University founded in 1870 (located in the New York City borough of Queens), and our own DePaul University founded here in Chicago in 1898. These institutions together educate more than 40,000 students, with hundreds of thousands of alumni.

St. Vincent de Paul believed in the power of education to transform the boundaries and enlarge the possibilities of an individual's life, as well as change for the better the political, social and economic realities of our world. He understood, in particular, what this educational empowerment means for students who often come from marginalized, under-represented, and under-resourced communities. He knew that a complex world could not be changed and made more just unless it was first carefully studied and understood. He knew that the education that mattered educated the whole person. As Catholic institutions of higher education, DePaul and its sister Vincentian universities are fully invested in the future of our students, and indeed the future of our communities, our nation, and our planet. Yet we are keenly aware that there is a compelling and unforgettable history behind our journey to today, and our hopes for tomorrow.

The present exhibition poignantly reminds us of our Vincentian heritage, it reminds us that we began as pioneers and that we remain as pioneers, looking hopefully to the approaching horizon.



An Introduction to the Exhibits

Andrew Rea

Vincentian Librarian, DePaul University

God Alone as Compass, Rudder, and Pilot: The Missionary as a Pioneer

In 1803 the United States came into possession of more than 800,000 square miles of land in the form of the Louisiana Purchase, doubling the size of the young country and opening up a vast new frontier for exploration and colonization. European-Americans, free blacks, and Europeans all rushed westward as pioneers, and significant populations of both white and black settlers, as well as indigenous peoples, already existed in the formerly-French territories. With this influx of settlers came a need, and an opportunity, for Christian missionaries.

The exhibit *God Alone as Compass, Rudder, and Pilot: The Missionary as a Pioneer* explores the journey of the first Vincentian missionaries as they worked their way across Europe and the Atlantic, and then through the eastern half of the United States. Their journey—from its beginnings in Italy to its end in the Missouri Territory—took more than four years, concluded with the founding of the first seminary west of the Mississippi, and cost the lives of two of their party, including the Mission's first superior, Felix De Andreis.

While these men were priests, deacons, and seminarians, what is borne out during their journey is that their struggles and triumphs reflect those experiences that could be considered archetypal of American frontier life. They encountered a host of problems that beset every pioneer who made a similar journey: the differences in culture and language, the harsh conditions of the untamed frontier, and the basic need for food, potable water, and shelter.

These external struggles also mirrored the internal spiritual struggle of the faithful Catholic missionaries. Both De Andreis and his friend and eventual successor Joseph Rosati had long been interested in missionary work prior to De Andreis's chance meeting with Louis Valentine Dubourg in Rome, viewing the act of missioning as both a physical and spiritual journey, a challenge not just to body but to soul. Thus, the pioneer narrative that emerges from the writings of De Andreis and Rosati, as well as from the figures that surrounded both men, is one of both physical and spiritual adversity.

The men were subject to the impetuous decisions of their bishop Dubourg, who changed the mission's destination from cosmopolitan, French-speaking New Orleans to a site more than 70 miles from the frontier town of St. Louis shortly before the group left for America, causing such distress to the entire band that several of the missionaries simply quit. They were the victims of bad weather, both at sea and throughout their journey from Baltimore to Louisville, causing both pain and illness to members of the group.

They had their original ambitions to minister to slaves and indigenous peoples eroded as pragmatic, prosaic day-to-day pastoral and administrative duties came to the fore. And they had to unexpectedly wait, for almost two years, in the Kentucky wilderness while learning English and preparing for Dubourg's arrival in his diocese.

De Andreis, fully cognizant of the parallels in his worldly and spiritual journeys, wrote to a fellow Vincentian, "I admit the truth that the sea on which I have embarked is so vast, stormy and strangely varied, that if I could not from time to time glimpse the northern star of God's will so clearly and brilliantly as to calm my every anxiety, then I would soon go crazy and despair."¹

Despite this feeling of being lost or untethered, and despite the death of De Andreis in 1820, the journey proved a success: the group reached its goal, opened its first seminary in Perryville, Missouri, and began the American Vincentian tradition. With their faith guiding them, this small band of men founded a mission that endures two centuries later.

Knowledge and Salvation: The Missionary as a Man of the Enlightenment

French philosopher and author of the monumental *Encyclopédie* Denis Diderot wrote, "There are three principal means of acquiring knowledge available to us: observation of nature, reflection, and experimentation. Observation collects facts; reflection combines them; experimentation verifies the result of that combination. Our observation of nature must be diligent, our reflection profound, and our experiments exact."² The time during which Diderot wrote those words, the Age of Enlightenment, lasted roughly the entirety of the 18th century and concerned itself with the search for knowledge and reason. The modern ideas of liberty, tolerance, and the scientific method resulted from it, and those ideas directly spurred revolutions in France and the American colonies.

Diderot also wrote, "Take away a Christian's fear of hell and you also take away his faith,"³ which is to say that Enlightenment thinkers did not often have kind words for the Catholic Church, especially as France approached its revolution. Why, then, would a small group of missionary priests potentially carry the many volumes of a revised and expanded edition of Diderot's *Encyclopédie* with them to America, or bring them halfway across the North American continent, only to install them in the library of their first seminary, St. Mary's of the Barrens, in 1818?

The *Encyclopédie* volumes now sit on the shelves in the DePaul University Special Collections and Archives as part of what has been named the Opening Day Collection, as do the rest of the books in this exhibit: texts on scripture, on nature, on classics. It is important to understand that this collection represents all of the pre-1818 titles held at the library of St. Mary's in Perryville, Missouri, so we in Special Collections have no real way of knowing which were brought over by that first group of Vincentians that included Felix De Andreis and Joseph Rosati.⁴ Still, there is no doubt that Enlightenment thought, and Enlightenment learning, influenced both of those men and the others that joined them in coming to America.

The exhibit *Knowledge and Salvation: The Missionary as a Man of the Enlightenment* explores these influences through selected titles of the Opening Day Collection. From the sciences, to history, to geography, to of course theology and philosophy, these books demonstrate the implicit importance of Enlightenment knowledge to the missionaries perhaps for their own betterment, but certainly for the betterment and education of the young men they hoped to attract to their seminary. Books by Samuel Johnson, Ben Franklin, and Pascal join those by Aquinas, Augustine, and various editions of the Bible.

The more explicit value of books, and the knowledge they contain, can be seen in the writings of the missionaries themselves. De Andreis writes, "I find myself in some worry since I am deprived of so many books,"⁵ and opines that he lives "in a state of the most complete poverty as regards providing the house with books."⁶ The access to, and diffusion of, knowledge was a key component to the Enlightenment ideal of a free society, and beyond his role as a recipient, De Andreis himself created such knowledge, writing "Important Information Concerning the Mission in Louisiana," a travel guide and narrative full of useful facts about the cities, towns, and counties in which he finds himself. It is seemingly constructed to pass on his experiences to others, and displays the qualities of observation, reflection, and experimentation so important to Diderot.

After the founding of St. Mary's, the Vincentians began teaching the charism of their founder alongside the Enlightenment ideas contained in their library, first to seminarians and later to lay students, creating first a mission, and eventually a province, comprised of well-rounded, curious young men. It is these lives, and the lives they in turn went on to affect, that began to form the lasting testament to those first Vincentians in America.

1 Rybolt, John. *Felix De Andreis: Frontier Missionary*. Chicago: Vincentian Studies Institute, 2005, p. 315.

2 From "On the Interpretation of Nature." In *Diderot's Selected Writings*, ed. Lester G. Crocker. New York: MacMillan, 1966, p.73.

3 From "Philosophic Thoughts." In *Diderot's Selected Writings*, ed. Lester G. Crocker. New York: MacMillan, 1966, p.9.

4 For more information on the Opening Day Collection, see Rev. Edward Udovic's "History of the Collection" in *West of the Mississippi*. Chicago: DePaul University, 1996.

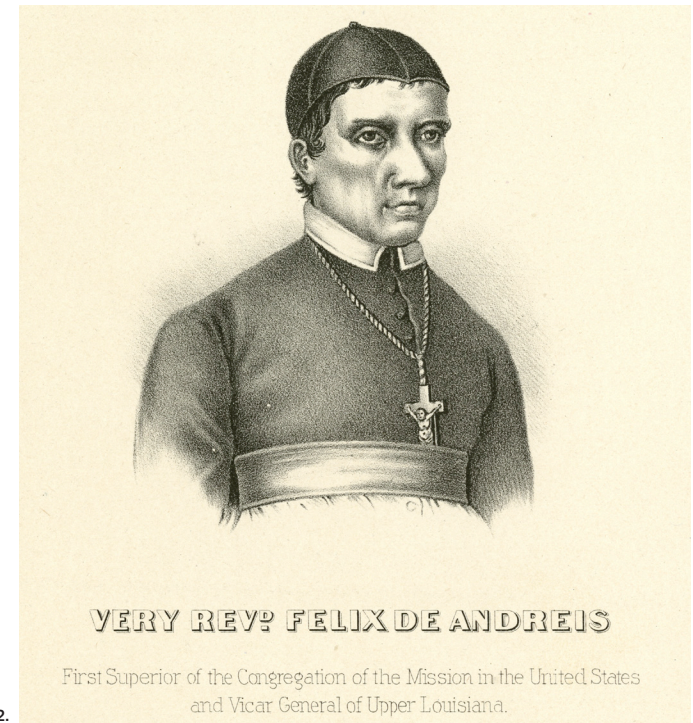
5 Rybolt, p. 182.

6 Ibid, p. 232.

God Alone as Compass, Rudder, and Pilot: The Missionary as a Pioneer

Exhibition at DePaul University's John T. Richardson Library

Europe: September 1815-June 1816



VERY REV. FELIX DE ANDREIS
First Superior of the Congregation of the Mission in the United States and Vicar General of Upper Louisiana.

2.



Joseph Rosati, vicario di S. Louis
Giuseppe Rosati, vescovo di San Luigi. José Rosati, obispo de San Luis.
Cesare Greco, editore. 22, Bonaparte, Parigi.

3.

1. Piazza di Monte Citorio in Rome
Engraving, 17th century
Collection of Vincentian ephemera

In 1815 Louis William Valentine Dubourg, a Sulpician priest, visited Rome in hopes of recruiting men to serve in his new diocese. Pope Pius VII had recently named Dubourg apostolic administrator to Louisiana and the Two Floridas, an enormous area of the United States primarily acquired in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803. Dubourg would later become its bishop. It was in Rome, while staying at Monte Citorio, the Vincentian house there, that Dubourg met a young Italian Vincentian named Felix De Andreis. This meeting eventually led to the establishment of the Vincentian Mission in the United States.

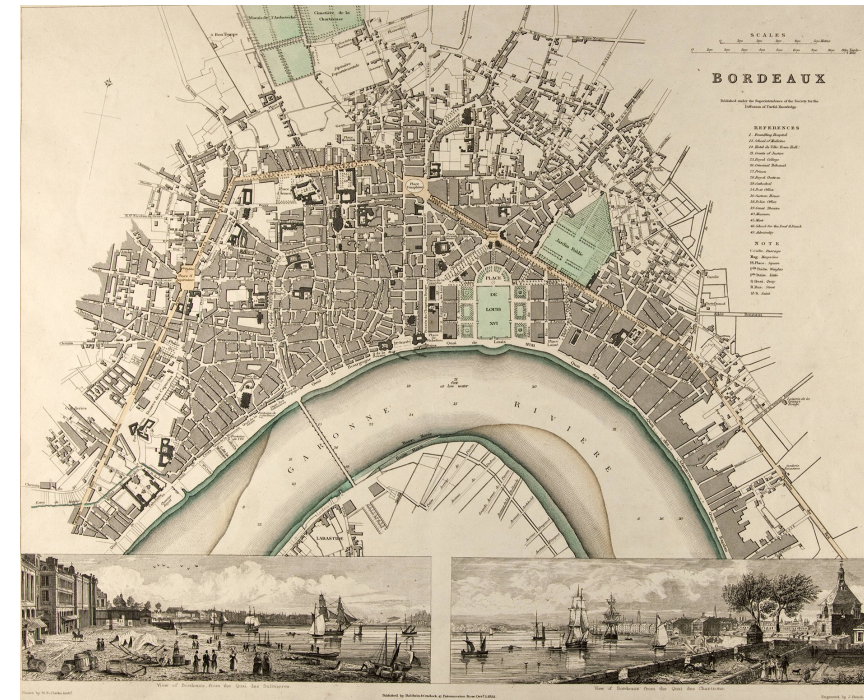
2. Portrait of Rev. Felix De Andreis, C.M.
Lithograph, from *Sketches of the Life of the Very Rev. Felix de Andreis*, by Francis Burlando
Baltimore: Kelly, Hedian & Piet, 1861
SpC. 266.0092 A559R1891

Felix De Andreis (1778-1820) was a Northern Italian Vincentian who became the first superior of the Vincentian Mission in the United States, and later the Vicar General of Upper Louisiana. A deeply spiritual and reflective man, De Andreis had long desired to be a missionary, though his voyage into the United States proved more difficult than he had imagined. The constant hardships and administrative gridlock that caused the mission to progress so slowly took a toll on De Andreis, and he eventually succumbed to illness in 1820. He is currently a candidate for beatification and canonization.

3. Portrait of Rev. Joseph Rosati, C.M.
Lithograph, from *Histoire Générale des Missions Catholiques*, by Mathieu Richard Auguste Henrion
Paris: Gaume Frères, 1846
VSI. 266.2 H519h1847

Joseph Rosati (1789-1843) hailed from Southern Italy, and was ordained just four years before agreeing to accompany his friend Felix De Andreis to the United States. Whereas De Andreis excelled at theology and leading by example, Rosati was a pragmatist skilled in the more practical aspects of priesthood. He proved an excellent administrator, first overseeing the building of the new Vincentian seminary in Perryville, Missouri, then as its first president, then coadjutor bishop to Dubourg, and finally as the first bishop of St. Louis.

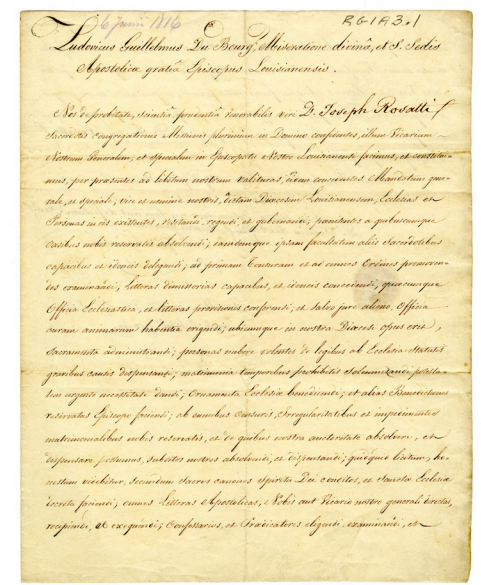
Europe: September 1815-June 1816



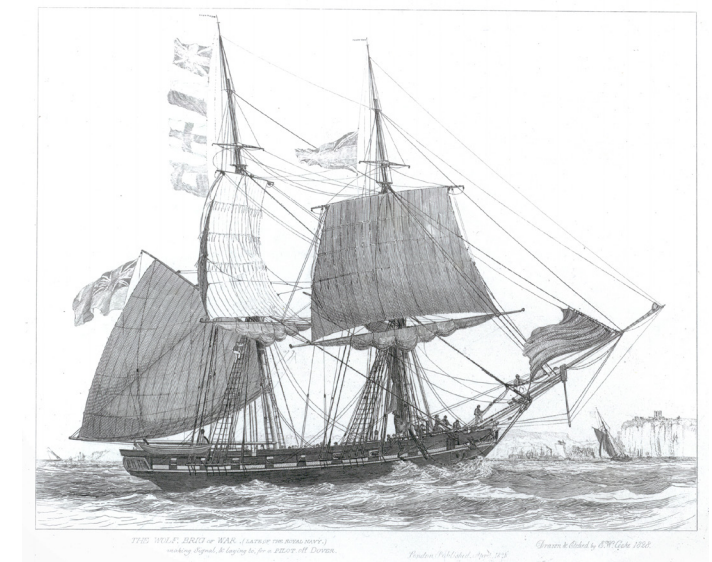
4.

4. Bordeaux, by W.B. Clarke
[London]: Baldwin & Cradock, 1832
SpCM. 912.447144 C597b1832

Prior to their voyage to the New World, Dubourg's band of missionaries assembled in Bordeaux in January 1816. It was there they received the shocking news that Dubourg had dramatically changed his plans for the American mission. The band had been told a year before that their destination would be New Orleans, but due to diocesan concerns Dubourg was now shifting the site to St. Louis. This news and the expectation of having to learn English instead of French frightened several of the missionaries enough to resign from the voyage.



5.



6.

5. Appointment of Joseph Rosati as Vicar General of the Diocese of Louisiana
Bordeaux, 6 June 1816
Courtesy of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives

A week prior to setting sail for America, the leaders of the mission, De Andreis and Rosati, were named vicars general of the Louisiana province. A vicar general assists a bishop with the administration of his diocese, allowing one to establish parishes, give sacraments, etc. In this case, De Andreis—the more senior priest and head of the mission—was the true vicar general, while Rosati had the jurisdiction to act as vicar in the former's absence or death. This also allowed the priests to act on Dubourg's behalf until they met him in the United States, which turned out to be more than two years from their appointments.

6. "The Wolf, Brig of War"
Engraving, from *Sixty-Five Plates of Shipping and Craft*, by E.W. Cooke
London: [s.n.], 1828
Collection of Vincentian ephemera

De Andreis, Rosati, and eleven others set sail from Bordeaux at midnight on 13 June 1816. Dubourg stayed behind, planning on following shortly. He had booked the group passage on an American brig named the Ranger, which looked much like the British example in this engraving. The transatlantic voyage took over six weeks, during which time the missionaries set up a "floating seminary" of sorts, and said Mass every Sunday and on the feast day of St. Vincent, which fell during their time at sea. They landed in Baltimore harbor on July 26, just after having endured a very strong storm.

Baltimore: July-September 1816

7. *A Complete View of Baltimore, by Charles Varle and others*

Baltimore: Samuel Young, 1833
SpC. 917.526 V314c1833

Baltimore was the center, and first diocese, of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States. Bishop Dubourg's Sulpician confreres in Baltimore hosted the missionaries for the two months the group was there. The visitors were welcomed at St. Mary's Seminary, founded in 1791 by Dubourg under John Carroll, the first bishop in the United States. This contemporary guide to the city of Baltimore gives a snapshot of its citizens, businesses, and governmental agencies, and includes an entry on St. Mary's.

8. Map from *A Complete View of Baltimore*

See above citation (no. 7)

De Andreis, Rosati, and their companions had prepared for the United States by donning the less formal clerical clothing common for American clergy, but were by no means ready for their encounters with Americans. In his writings of Baltimore, De Andreis remarks on the large amount of African-Americans (whom he incorrectly presumes are slaves), the "fanatical" Methodist preachers, the incredible cost of goods, especially wine, and his inability to speak English well enough to be understood: "The fourteen vowel sounds and the consonants cripple the tongue." This map of Baltimore, published seventeen years after the missionaries landed there, gives some indication of the first American city they encountered.

9. *St. Mary's Seminary student award, signed by Rev. Simon Bruté de Remur, S.S.*

Baltimore, 1817
Collection of Vincentian ephemera

Simon Bruté de Remur was the administrator of St. Mary's while the missionaries were in Baltimore. Bruté had arrived in Baltimore in 1810 with the missionaries' most important American contact: Benedict Joseph Flaget. He remained a friend and confidant of both De Andreis and Rosati well after they completed their journey west. His own clerical voyage eventually led him west as well, to become the first bishop of Vincennes, Indiana. Beyond his relationships with both Rosati and De Andreis, Bruté was also the spiritual advisor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

10. *Observation by a Protestant on a Profession of Catholic Faith by a Clergyman of Baltimore, attributed to John Bowden*

New York: David Longworth, 1816
SpC. 230.2 B784o1816

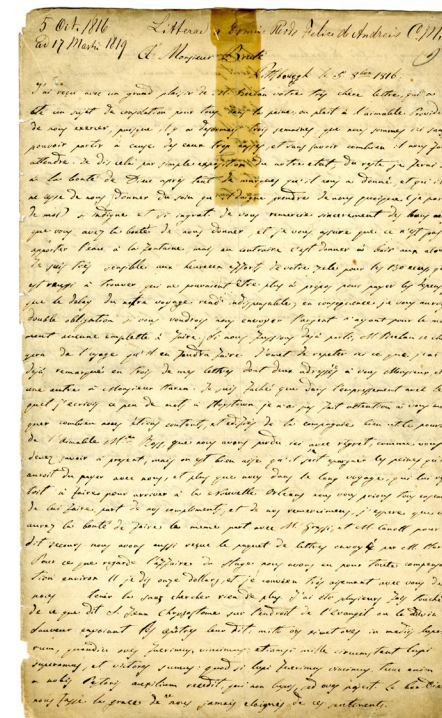
Most of the missionary group was Italian, and had likely never encountered large numbers of Protestants before. Baltimore changed that. De Andreis writes throughout his time in America that many of the Protestants he encounters are "well disposed toward Catholicism," and that were there enough priests, the Church could play a prominent role in the country. Still, many Protestants were suspicious of the Catholic faith and were vocal in their criticism. This volume is an anonymous diatribe against Catholicism, published in Baltimore the year the missionaries landed there.



8.

Detail

Pittsburgh: September-October 1816



11.

11. Letter to Simon Bruté de Remur, from Felix De Andreis

Pittsburgh, 5 October 1816
Courtesy of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives

When the missionaries arrived in Pittsburgh, they were surprised by the frontier feel of the city of 10,000. The trip from Baltimore had been long, uncomfortable at best, and dangerous at worst, and their accommodations in Pittsburgh now left something to be desired. It was already clear to De Andreis and Rosati that funds for their trip were in short supply, though a letter from Simon Bruté arrived with \$170.00 in donations for the missionaries' needs. Money would continue to be an issue for the band, and with no access to funding until Dubourg's arrival, they often had very little in the way of provisions.

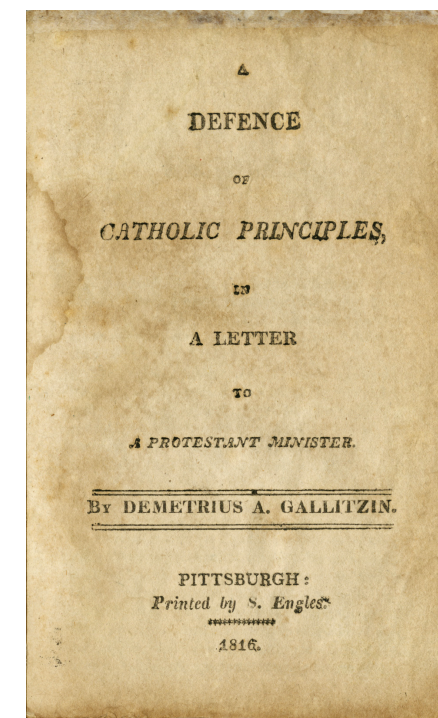


12.

12. *Plan von Pittsburg und Umgebungen*, by Heinrich Luden

Weimar: Wilhelm Hoffman, 1828
SpCM. 912.76675 P699h1828

By 1816, Pittsburgh was an important metal and glass manufacturing center. The trip from Baltimore had been longer and more difficult than expected. It could have proven disastrous, as a falling boulder almost crushed several members of the band. A constant rain also caused their transport to slip from the road and fall into a nearby river. It took them nine days to make the 250 mile journey. The inns in Pittsburgh proved to be too expensive, and soon the band found themselves lodging at various homes of sympathetic Catholics and, interestingly for them, Protestants.



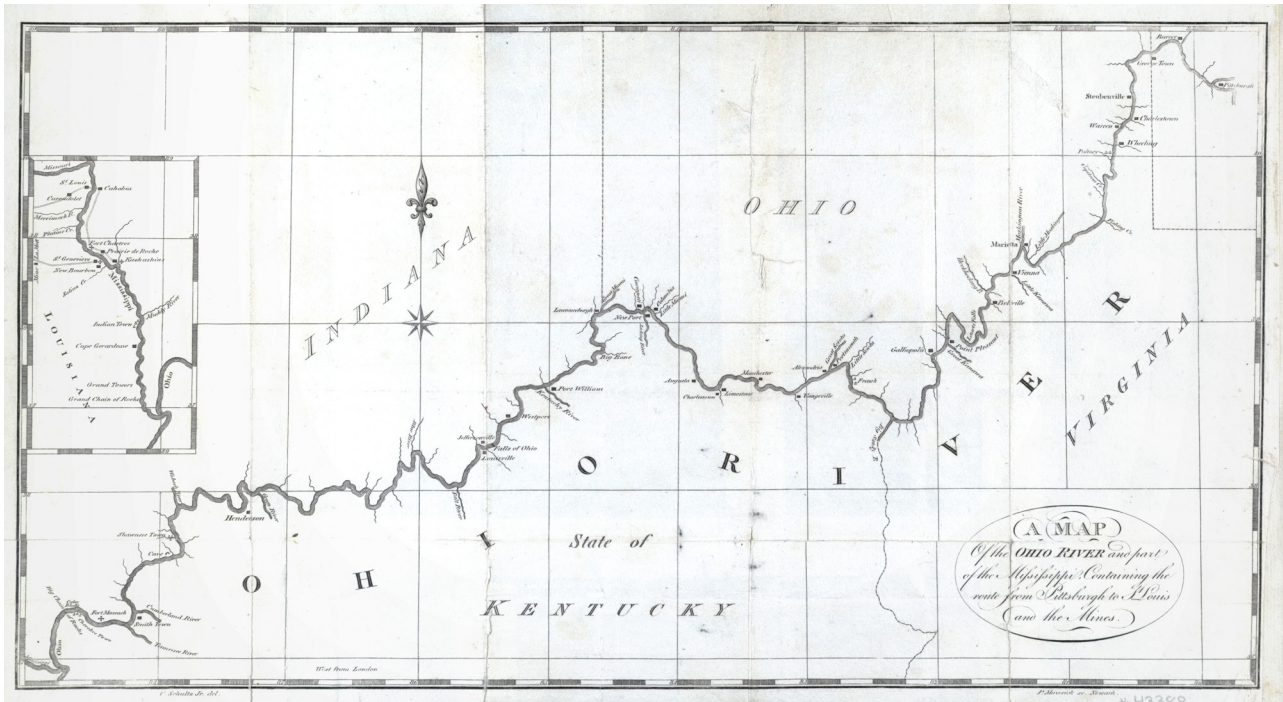
13.

13. *A Defence of Catholic Principles, in a Letter to a Protestant Minister in America*, by Demetrius Gallitzin

Pittsburgh: S. Engles, 1816
SpC. 230.2 G626d1816

De Andreis wrote to his superior in Rome that there were barely 300 Catholics in Pittsburgh when he arrived there in September 1816. "They have a small church bereft of everything, and the pastor, whose parish is the size of ten dioceses, is always away traveling to visit his parishioners." This pro-Catholic tract was written by Demetrius Gallitzin, a wealthy Dutch-Russian priest who had immigrated to the U.S. in 1792. He enrolled in St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore as one of its first students, and later wrote this, one of the first books in defense of the Catholic Church published in the United States.

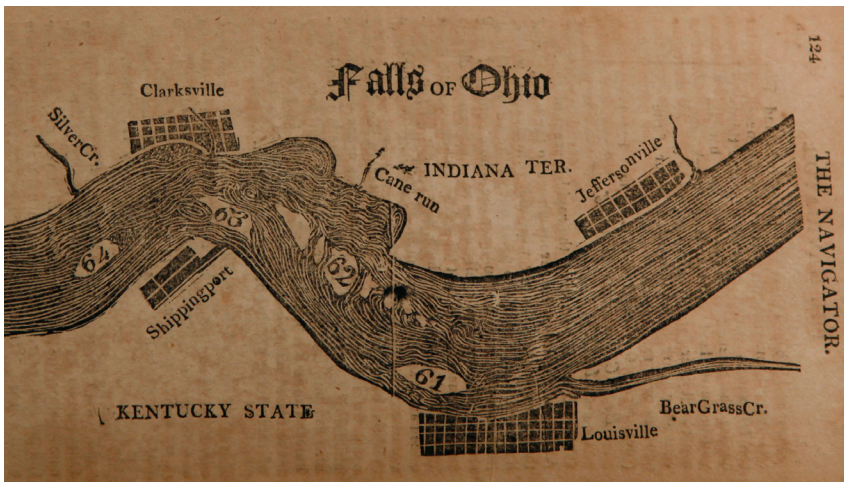
Ohio River: October-November 1816



14.

14. **A Map of the Ohio River and Part of the Mississippi, by Christian Schultz**
New York: Isaac Riley, 1810
SpCM. 912.77 S387m1810

The Ohio River forms in Pittsburgh and flows westward until its confluence with the Mississippi. In the 19th century, it became the major waterway for both people and goods travelling west. When the missionary band boarded their flatboat on 27 October 1816, their plan was to alight in Louisville, Kentucky, and proceed to Bardstown and St. Thomas Seminary. It would take them 23 days to reach their destination, and the 600 miles they would go represented the longest single leg of their trip within the United States.



15.

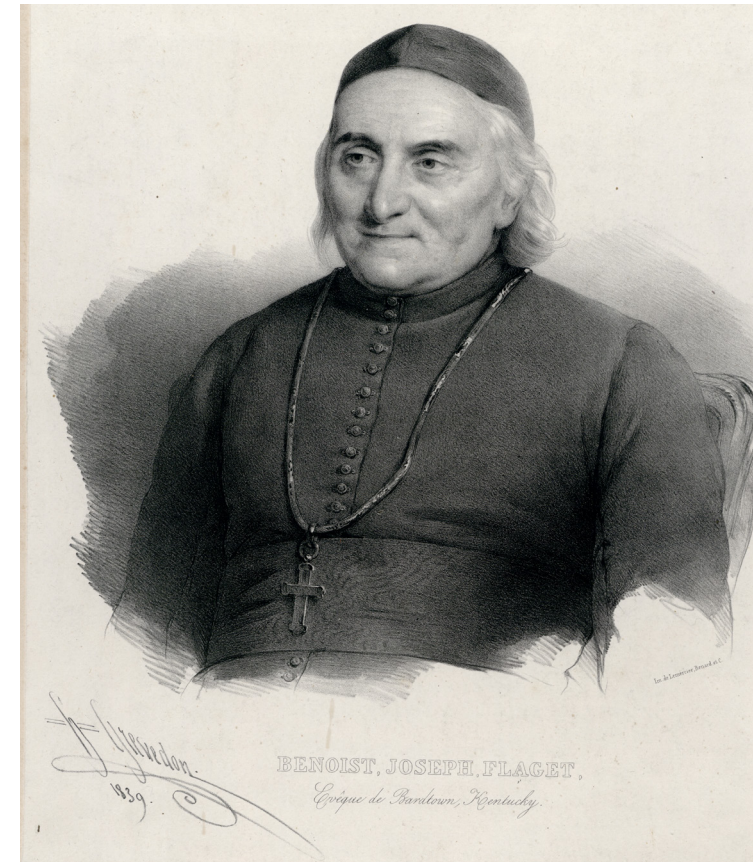
15. **The Navigator, by Zadok Cramer**
Pittsburgh: Cramer, Spear & Eichbaum, 1811
SpC. 917.7 C889n1811

This book is a manual for navigating the Ohio River, with both textual descriptions and maps of the different bends and landmarks along the river's course. As the band travelled down the Ohio, they stopped at many small towns or homesteads along the way, oftentimes saying Mass or proselytizing those they met. This copy of *The Navigator* was owned at some point by Simon Bruté, who may have given it to Rosati or De Andreis as the group prepared for the later legs of their journey while in Baltimore.

16. **"The Flatboat"**
Lithograph, from *A History of Transportation in the Ohio Valley*, by Charles Henry Ambler
Glendale, CA: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1931
386.3 A493H

The vessel on which the missionaries travelled down the Ohio was called a flatboat, a small, flat-bottomed barge-like vessel that floated with the current and could be piloted quite easily. Rosati wrote, "One sees a considerable number of them on the Ohio, the Mississippi, and their tributaries, loaded with produce from the countryside that is being taken to the great market of the west, New Orleans." The remains of only one flatboat have ever been found, so much of what is known about them has been gleaned through illustrations and travel accounts.

Kentucky: November 1816-September 1818



17.

17. **Portrait of Rev. Benedict Joseph Flaget, S.S.**
Engraving, 1839
Collection of Vincentian ephemera

Benedict Joseph Flaget was the most important contact the missionary band had in their time travelling to Missouri. Flaget was born in France and fled his home country to avoid the fallout of the French Revolution. He arrived in Baltimore in 1792 with a number of other priests and was quickly dispatched to the western American frontier. In 1808 he reluctantly assumed the office of bishop of the new diocese of Bardstown, eventually founding parishes as far away as Michigan. De Andreis wrote that Flaget traveled so often and for so long, riding from parish to parish, that he was "one with his horse."

18. **Sketches of the Early Catholic Missions of Kentucky from Their Commencement in 1787 to the Jubilee of 1826-7, by M. J. Spalding and Stephen T. Badin**
Louisville: B.J. Webb, [1844?]
VSl. 282.769 S734S1844

Bardstown was an important center of early Catholicism in the then-western frontier of the United States. In fact, the English Catholics of Perryville that had invited the Vincentians had relocated from western Kentucky. Along with Flaget, others based in the area—Stephen Badin (the first Catholic priest ordained in the United States), Jean-Baptiste-Marie David (eventual successor of Flaget), Catherine Spalding (founder of the Sisters of Charity of Nazareth) and Charles Nerinckx (missionary and founder of the Sisters of Loretto)—all proved to be important pillars in early Catholic America.

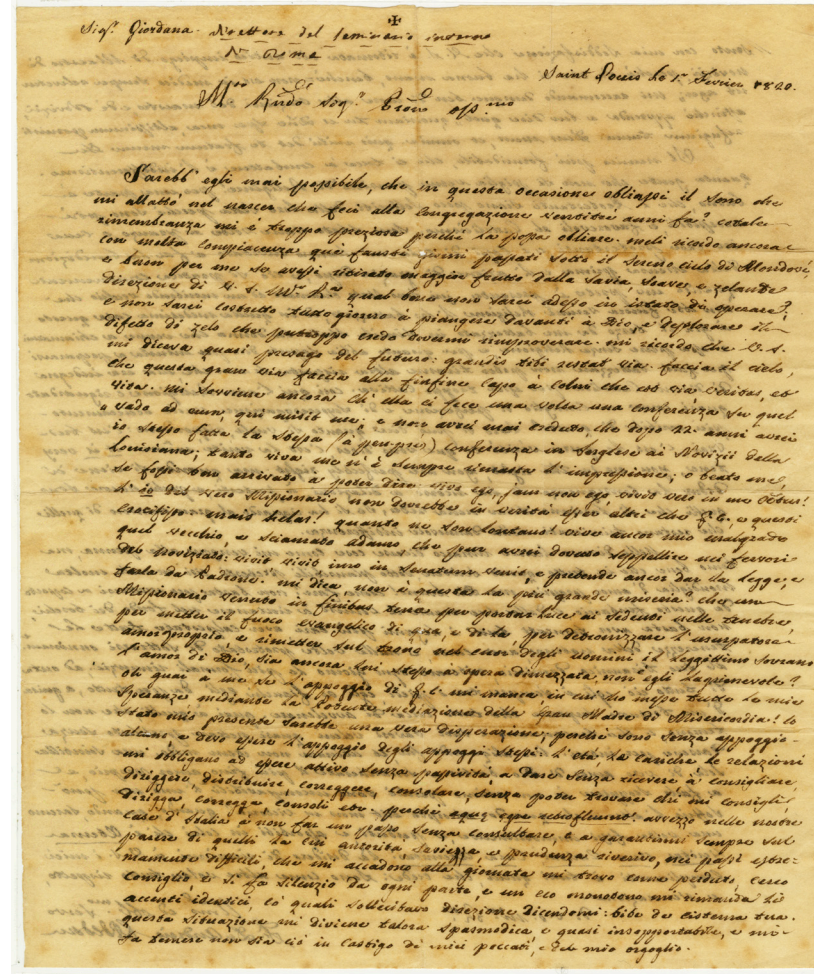


19.

Detail

19. **Kentucky, by Enoch Gridley**
From *Carey's General Atlas, Improved and Enlarged*
Philadelphia: Matthew Carey, 1814
SpCM. 912.769 C275k1814

St. Thomas Seminary in Bardstown, Kentucky, was the home of the missionaries from December 1816 until October 1818. It was here, in log cabins within a forest, that they learned English, taught theology, said Mass, and gave missions in surrounding areas. It was here that De Andreis truly began to feel homesick for Italy. He wrote to his brother of the hardships on the frontier: "At the end [of the day], exhausted by the fast, the fatigues, the travel, the sun, we then have to beg a meal somewhere. This means roast meat with a little bit of cornbread and water, no wine, no vinegar or oil, no soup, etc."



20.



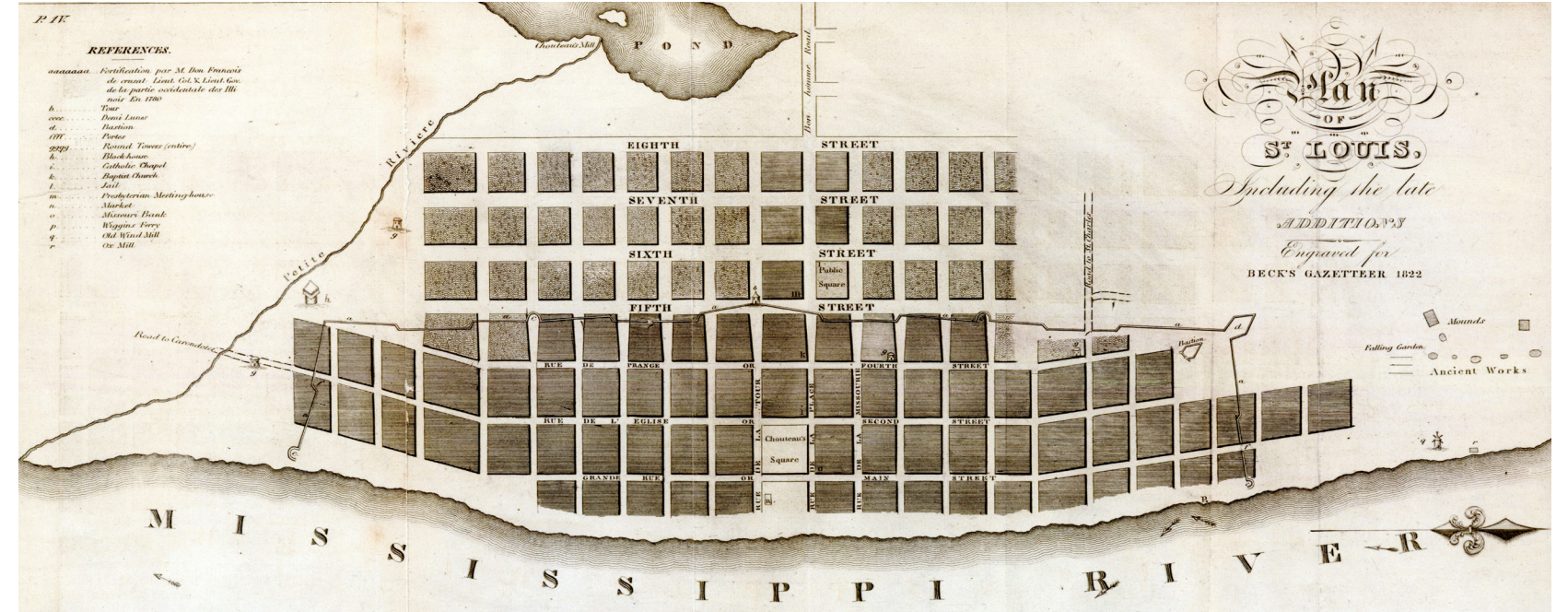
21.

20. Letter to Filippo Giordana, from Felix De Andreis
 St. Louis, 2 January 1820
 DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

After De Andreis departed Bardstow in October 1817, he travelled with Flaget and Rosati first to the French settlement of Sainte Genevieve in Missouri, where they met up with Dubourg. While Flaget and Rosati returned to St. Thomas, De Andreis relocated to St. Louis with Dubourg. Here he assisted Dubourg in running the diocese. He found the work difficult and thankless. He was often lonely and depressed, exacerbated by his worsening health. This letter dates from such a period. In it, De Andreis writes to a former mentor about his lack of support and his frustration with his work in St. Louis.

21. Crucifix, wood and brass
 Undated, 2 3/8 x 5 inches
 DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

De Andreis and Rosati both agreed to travel to the United States with the hopes of having a chance to minister to several groups that were, from their perspective, unique to the country: black slaves and indigenous peoples. Due to practical responsibilities, those missions never materialized. Still, both men (as well as the others in the band) were able to assist Catholics and Protestants alike in spiritual matters. This crucifix was given by De Andreis to such a girl on the occasion of her First Communion, and was later gifted back to the Vincentians by her family.



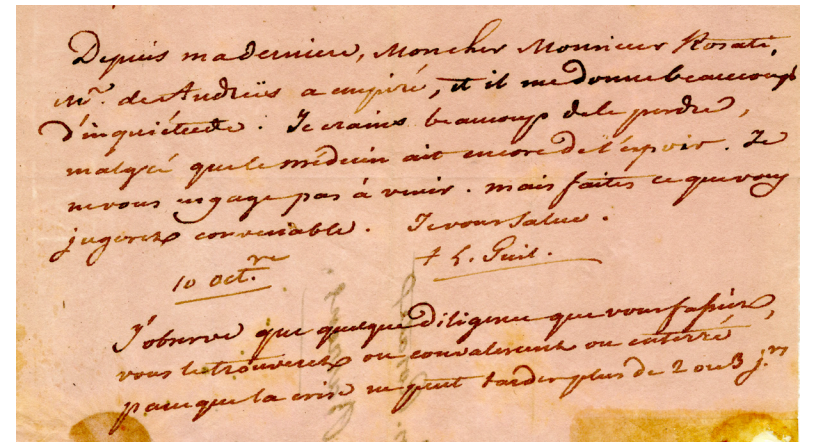
22.

22. Plan of St. Louis, Including the Late Additions, by Lewis Beck
 From Gazetteer of the States of Illinois and Missouri
 Albany, NY: C.R. and G. Webster, 1823
 VSIM. 912.778 B393p2000

St. Louis in the early 19th century was nothing more than a small settlement on the banks of the Mississippi. Prior to De Andreis and Dubourg's arrival, the town had no Catholic priest, and the old log church building they inherited was in a state of disrepair. By early 1820 a new cathedral had been built, and De Andreis had been placed in charge of a new Vincentian seminary in St. Louis while St. Mary's was being constructed in Perryville. During his time in St. Louis, De Andreis was not only an administrator, but also found himself performing the duties of a parish priest.

23. Letter to Joseph Rosati, from Louis Valentine Dubourg
 St. Louis, 10 October 1820
 Courtesy of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives

Felix De Andreis had always been of delicate health. His superior in Rome worried about his travelling as a missionary for this exact reason. It appears that he suffered from both physical and mental ailments, and it's likely that a combination of both led to his eventual death. The stress and depression related to his post in St. Louis had exacerbated a chronic stomach ailment, which had almost killed him in early 1819. In the fall of 1820, he likely contracted typhoid, for which he was prescribed calomel, a solution containing the toxin mercury. He died on 15 October 1820, a vital member of the St. Louis community. This letter was written five days prior to De Andreis's death, and tells of his worsening condition.



23.

Detail



27.



28.

24. Missouri

From *A Complete Historical, Chronological, and Geographical American Atlas*, by Henry Charles Carey Philadelphia: H.C. Carey and I. Lea, 1822 SpCM. 917.78 M678c1822

Missouri became a state in the Union in 1820; at the time St Mary's of the Barrens was established in 1818, Missouri was still a territory of the United States. The seminary stands just outside the town of Perryville, 75 miles from Saint Louis. Perryville is in southeastern Missouri, and was at the time considered a "barrens," a grasslands or prairie. It was also the location where a group of English Catholics had settled some fourteen years prior. The *Western Gazetteer* (1817) notes that the land around Perryville is "broken, but yields good crops.... The bottoms are deep and capable of producing the greatest crops."

25. Chalice, wood and brass

Undated, 9 1/2 x 4 3/8 inches DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

Joseph Rosati supervised the planning and building of St. Mary's, and was named superior of the mission after De Andreis's death in 1820. He oversaw the Vincentians that arrived there, taught classes to the seminarians, and served as pastor of the parish, all the while ensuring construction progressed. He was also now vicar-general to Dubourg, which added diocesan responsibilities to an already-packed schedule. His leadership was so trusted by his superiors that he was eventually consecrated as the first bishop of the new St. Louis diocese in 1827. This is a chalice used by Rosati during his bishopric.

26. Act of incorporation of St. Mary's of the Barrens Seminary

Perryville, Missouri, 6 January 1823 DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

The community of Catholics that approached Dubourg to donate their land as the site for a seminary and church had originated in England, immigrated to Baltimore, moved to Kentucky, and finally settled in southeastern Missouri. Dubourg was noncommittal, however, and made his decision only upon visiting the area once he arrived in the U.S. in 1817. The seminary was formally incorporated in 1823, with Rosati writing the articles of incorporation. Dubourg resigned as bishop of Louisiana in 1826 while in Europe, never again returning to the United States.

27. Sketch of the first building at St. Mary's of the Barrens, by Felix De Andreis

St. Louis, 23 September 1819 Courtesy of the Vincentian Curia Archives, Rome, Italy

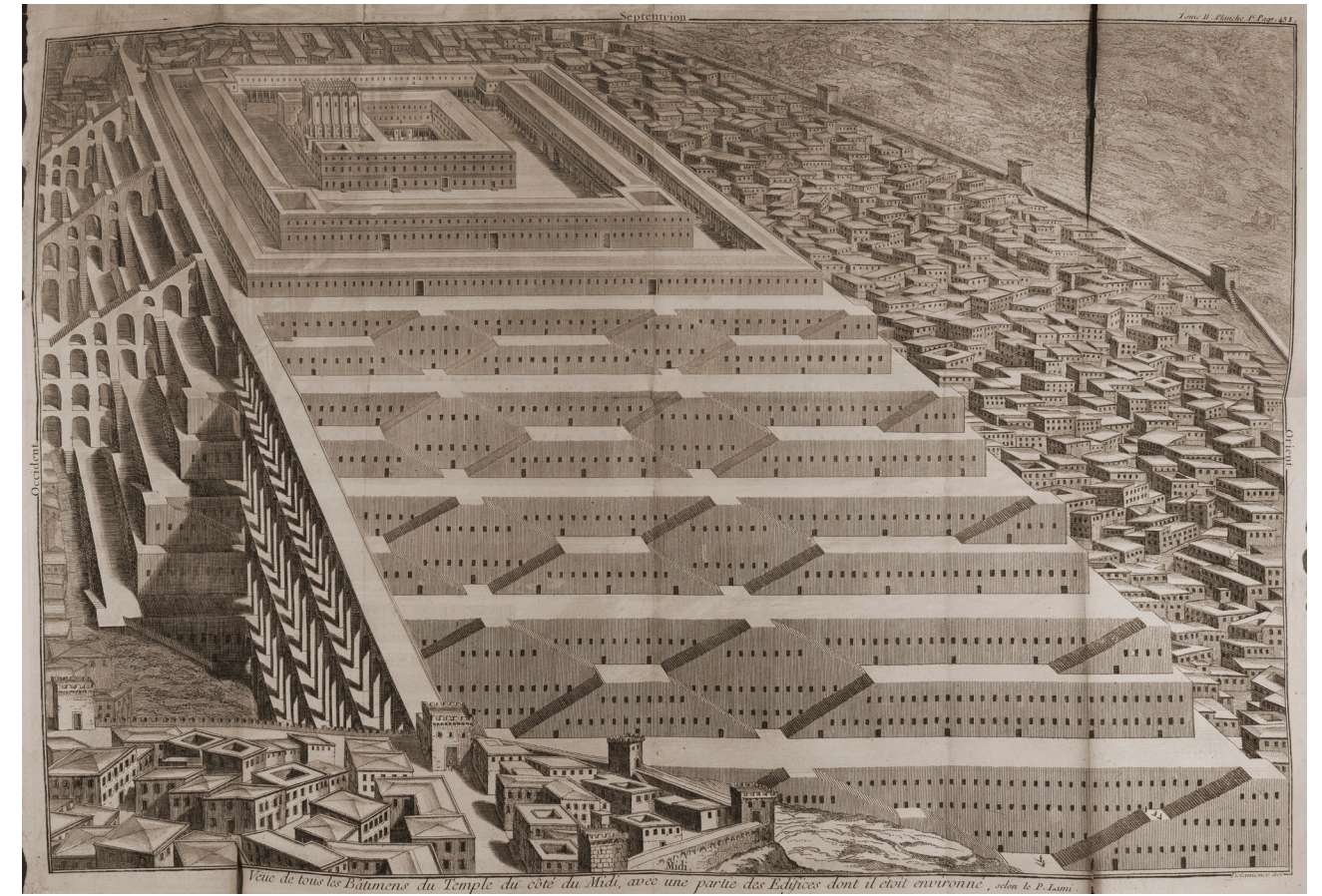
28. Photograph of St. Mary's of the Barrens

Perryville, Missouri, undated DeAndreis-Rosati Memorial Archives

In its first twenty years of operation, St. Mary's of the Barrens graduated 120 seminarians, 45 of whom were ordained as priests. This is an amazing feat, considering the difficulty of construction. According to Rosati, "It was quite difficult at that time to erect any other kind of building than a 'log house' in a rural area. It was very difficult to find workers and materials. The prices were exorbitant. The smallest thing stopped the construction." Both this photograph and the sketch above give a view of the initial building at the Barrens, later called the "A Building," though the photograph depicts several buildings added long after Rosati had left his post there.

Knowledge and Salvation: The Missionary as a Man of the Enlightenment

Exhibition at DePaul University's John T. Richardson Library



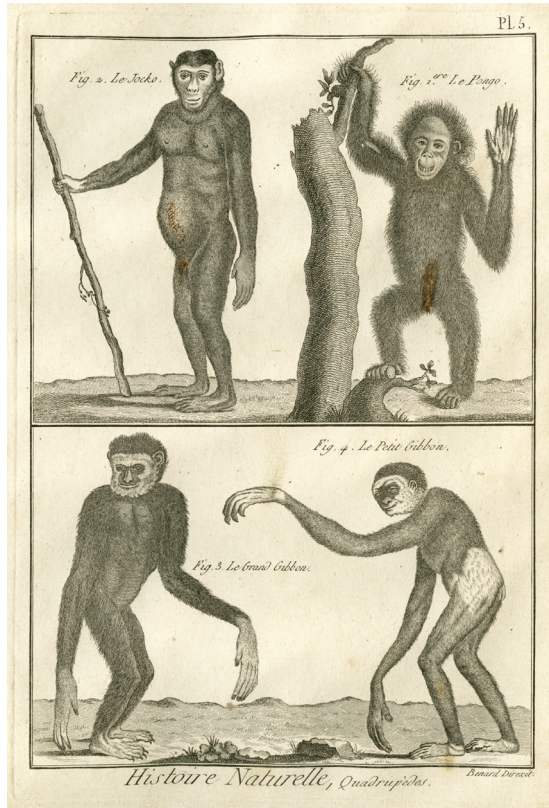
1.

1. La Sainte Bible en Latin et en François, by Augustin Calmet and others

Paris: Antoine Boudet and Nicolas Desaint; Avignon: François-Barthelemi Merande, 1767 CM. 220.47 B5831767

This seventeen volume Bible was gifted to the missionaries by the archbishop of Bourdeaux before they set sail for the United States. The set is remarkable for its numerous engravings (most being maps and architectural

plans or renderings) and its lengthy commentary, and is an excellent example of a French Enlightenment Bible. The Enlightenment's focus on reason, logic, and discovery are applied through both exegesis and illustration. On display is a view of the Temple of Solomon, based on the measurements and description provided in the Old Testament. Obviously, Bibles would have been extremely important to the missionaries for use on their travels, but this particular set was certainly intended for use in a more academic setting.



2.

2. Encyclopédie Methodique, ou par Ordre de Matières, by various authors
Paris: C. Panckoucke and H. Agasse; Liège: Plomteux, 1782-1832
CM. 034.1

If there is a single work that epitomizes the ideals of the Age of Enlightenment, a good argument can be made for Denis Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, a 28-volume systematic collection of human knowledge that aimed to transform how readers saw the world around them. Diderot (1713-1784), a well-respected philosopher, commissioned a group of some of the greatest minds in France to contribute to the endeavor. The process

took over 20 years (1751-1772), featured over a hundred contributors, and included roughly 75,000 entries.

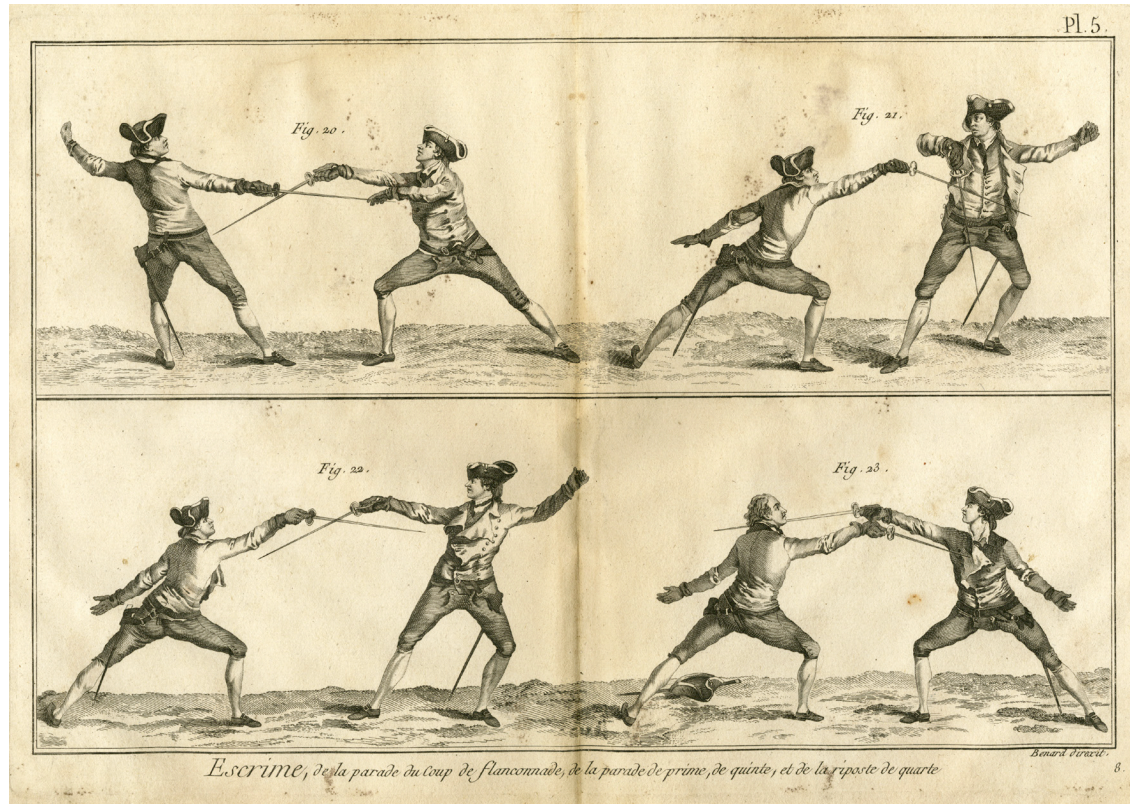
This volume is from a slightly later, revised, and expanded edition entitled the *Encyclopédie Methodique*. Published and conceived of by Charles-Joseph Panckoucke (1736-1798), it sought not only to correct and increase the content covered, but also to arrange entries into subject areas, whereas Diderot had simply relied on a general alphabetical order. The result was a monstrous set of over 200 volumes with over 6000 engraved illustrations, though the full planned encyclopedia was never completed.

Several subjects were never published, as was the *Vocabulaire Universel*—the set's key and table of contents—making the entire encyclopedia largely unusable.

It is telling that a set of the *Encyclopédie Methodique* could have carried across the Atlantic Ocean, or over primitive dirt roads, down the Ohio River, and across the Mississippi to rest with the Vincentians at their first seminary in Perryville, Missouri. The implied importance and power of such knowledge is obvious, though the fact that these volumes still exist in their original state, waiting to be bound in gilded leather as was common for books like these, is also telling. It is

difficult to speculate on the use of the *Encyclopédie Methodique* in the early years of St. Mary's of the Barrens, yet in the effacement of the animal genitalia in many of the plates, there are signs of the struggle between religious conservatism and the Enlightenment-era democracy of knowledge that forms the backdrop of much of the missionaries' journey.

A later fire at St. Mary's singed and burned many volumes in this set.



Detail



3.

Detail



3. Maps from the Atlas Encyclopedique, part of the Encyclopédie Methodique, by Rigobert Bonne
Paris: C. Panckoucke, 1782-1788
SPCA Maps Collection

Maps play a central role in the act of traveling, and certainly this would have been the case in the early nineteenth century. Maps of America were still not often as accurate as a traveler of that time might like, as mapmakers were beholden to sporadic, and sometimes incorrect, information and surveying. Still, the maps of Rigobert Bonne—one of the preeminent cartographers of the late eighteenth century—are renowned for their accuracy and detail.

The maps on display for this exhibit mainly detail North America, from Canada to Panama, the Atlantic coast to the territories west of the Mississippi. The geography of the North American maps should be familiar to viewers, but many current place names are variants or completely missing, while the western half of the continent contains almost no detail at all. This physical representation of a lack of information is important to understanding the nature of the New World in the early nineteenth century, as well as how immigrants and visitors might see the vast, untamed wilderness of the American frontier.

4. *Index Librorum Prohibitorum Innoc. XI. P.M. Iussi Editus Usque ad Annum 1681*

Prague: Josephum A. Schilhart, 1726
SpC. 098.11 I38i1726

The Catholic Church's infamous list of banned books, the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum*, was started in 1559, a little over a century after Gutenberg's invention of his printing press. The list sought to suppress any printed material heretical or antithetical to Church teachings, and included texts by authors and thinkers as diverse as Galileo, Descartes, and John Milton. Balancing their spiritual devotion with a post-Enlightenment mindset would have at times been difficult for some of the missionaries. For example, the predecessor of the *Encyclopédie* on display in this exhibit was that of Denis Diderot, whose works appeared in the *Index*.

5. *Missale Romanum ex Decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini Restitutum*

Paris: Iacobum Keruer, 1578
CM. 264.023 C3631578

Following the Council of Trent (1545-1563), the Church recognized the need to standardize the diverse liturgical texts being printed and used throughout the Catholic world. The resulting Roman Missal, first published in 1570, contained the texts and rubrics essential to celebrating Mass, including a calendar of holy days, the liturgies and music used throughout the year, and instructions for sacraments. As both a teaching tool and an indispensable part of one of a priest's most primary functions, celebrating the Eucharist, this Missal would have been a vital resource to both the Vincentian missionaries and their seminarians. Felix De Andreis writes often about the joy he feels when he is able to say Mass while in America, even while in the most primitive of environs.

6. *Opera*, by Virgil and Johannes Minellius

London: s.n., 1688
CM. 873.01 V8161688

The classics played an important role in the collection of the first Vincentians in America, and form a large portion of the extant collection, second only to theological and religious books. Virgil (70 BCE-19 BCE) is considered one of the most important poets in the Western literary tradition, and his epic poem the Aeneid one of the cornerstones of the canon. This 17th century copy, published in London with notes by Dutch classicist Johannes Minellius, features a wonderful decorative title page, but is otherwise a very common edition akin to a modern "mass-market paperback."



6.



7.



8.

7. *Summa Theologica*, by Thomas Aquinas

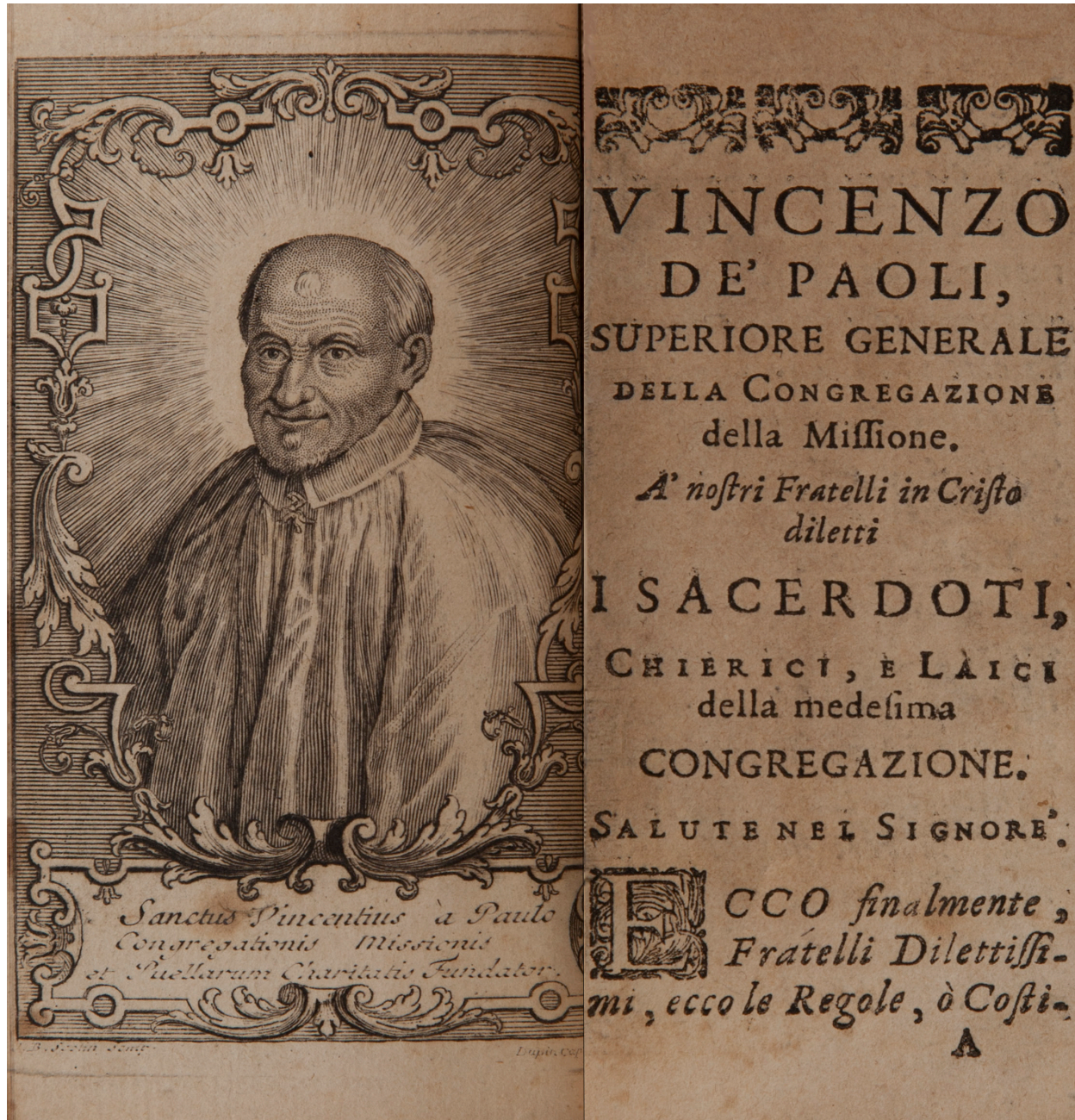
Naples: Josephi Raymundi, 1762
CM. 230.2 T454P1740

As the best-known text by Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), *Summa Theologica* is considered a foundational philosophical text and one of the most influential works in the western world. Aquinas's focus on the powers and limitations of the human character and his dissections of reason and natural law laid the groundwork for many key Enlightenment ideas. This edition from 1782 features an engraved frontispiece depicting Aquinas in his Dominican habit emblazoned with his emblem of a shining sun (representing his role as teacher of doctrine) at the moment of his divine inspiration. The canonical status and pedagogical value of *Summa Theologica* made it essential for seminary use, evidenced by the numerous editions that still exist in the missionaries' library.

8. *Novum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi Testamentum Syiacè*, by Ægidius Gutbier

Hamburg: Ægidius Gutbier, 1663
CM. 225.43 B5821663

Language studies, especially when applied to scripture, were a key part of a seminarian's education. Such studies allowed theologians to look back to biblical source languages as a path to better understand sacred texts. One such German theologian, Ægidius Gutbier, published the text seen here on the ancient language of Syriac. The complex linguistic relationships that captivated so many theologians and biblical scholars are beautifully represented on the quadrilingual title page to the Syriac New Testament. On the fly leaf, bound opposite of the title page, an eighteenth century reader added their own forward to the text. Works such as this one exemplify the level of philosophical, critical, and linguistic investigation expected of the missionaries and their students.



9.

9. Regole: Overo Costituzioni Comuni della Congregazione della Missione

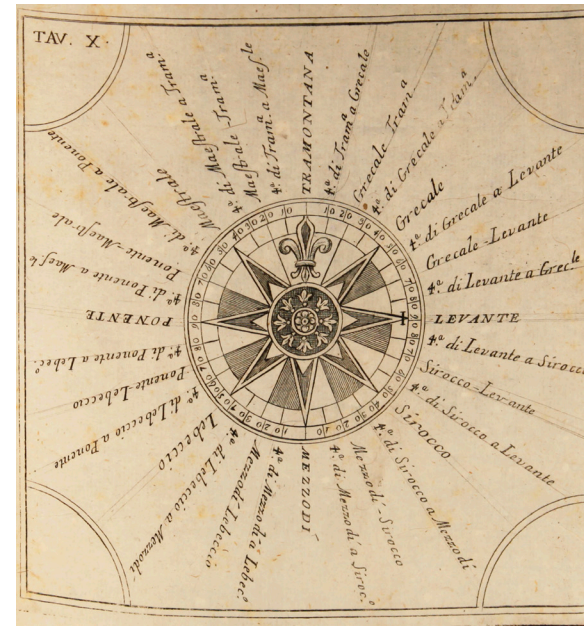
[Italy]: s.l., 1658
CM. 271.77 C7491658

After Vincent de Paul founded his Congregation of the Mission in 1625, he codified rules by which the community was governed and directed. These rules were eventually printed in 1658, two years prior to Vincent's death, and distributed amongst his confreres. This copy is in Italian, though it was also published in French and Latin. Copies were intended to be kept on one's person, so a pocket-sized edition like this one served a purpose. Vincent wrote, "I have tried to base all the Rules, where possible, on the spirit and actions of Jesus Christ. My idea was that men who are called to continue Christ's mission, which is mainly preaching the good news to the poor, should see things from His point of view and want what He wanted."

10. Flagellum Daemonum: Exorcismos Terribles, Potentissimos et Efficaces, by Girolamo Menghi

Lyon: Petri Landry, 1604
CM. 265.44 M5441604

One of the more singular titles in the missionary library of the first Vincentians, the *Flagellum Daemonum*, or "scourge of demons," was a popular exorcism manual by an Italian Franciscan first published in the late 16th century. The *Flagellum* offers step-by-step instructions for exorcising a variety of demons, and the fact that it was included in this particular library indicates that these missionaries (or their superiors) saw their role in the New World as essential spiritual guides who could perform the full range of Catholic rituals to those in need, even those possessed by demons. There is very little chance this book was ever utilized in anything other than an academic capacity.

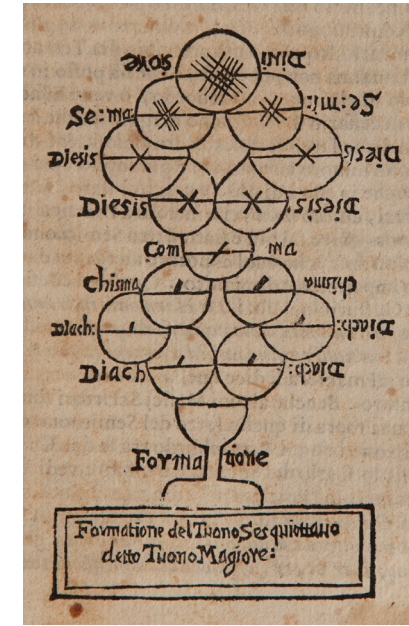


11.

11. Trattato della Sfera: Ed Introduzione alla Navigazione per Uso de' Piloti, by Giovanni Pagnini

Venice: Gio. Battista Recurti, 1750
CM. 623.89 P1391750

This navigational manual was devised for maritime pilots by the hydrographer of the Knights of Malta. It instructs the reader as to how use astronomy to read nautical charts, a principal skill for seafarers at the time. Once again, its inclusion in the library of the Italian Vincentian missionaries speaks to a potential need for practical skillsets (as they did cross the Atlantic, but certainly were not the navigators of the ship), but also the Enlightenment ideal of scientific knowledge. The volume contains a number of navigational drawings and pedagogical examples; the displayed engraving is of a compass rose with corresponding names of the winds.

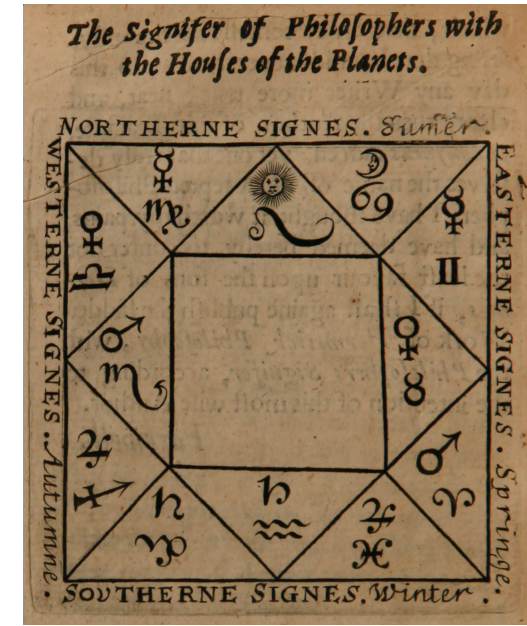


12.

12. Della Pratica Musica Vocale, et Strumentale, by Scipione Cerreto

Naples: Iacomo Carlino, 1601
CM. 781.1 C8171601

Scipione Cerreto was a Neapolitan music theorist, lutenist, and composer. His pedagogical treatise on music was produced at the very beginning of the 17th century, and it features a large number of woodcut examples, including this one diagramming musical tones. The American mission did not have much practical use for musical theory, as the group was often focused on the more pressing issue of simply finding places to say Mass, though one member was able to play organ if one was available. Even so, music had played an important historical role in both clerical and general education, and any academic or theological library would have contained volumes on sacred music.



13.

13. Arcanum, or, the Grand Secret of Hermetick Philosophy, by Jean d'Espagnet

London: J. Flesher, 1650
SpC. 540.112 E77a1650

This work stands alone as the only alchemical text known to have been in the missionaries' collection. It's remarkable to see a work such as this one, first published in French in 1623, included in the library of a group of priests and clerics, as hermetic alchemy and Christianity were often considered at odds, even during the Enlightenment. Importantly, the title page of this copy has been excised, perhaps indicating the book was at one point acquired or held with some secrecy. Also interesting is the large amount of marginalia, suggesting the book was read and commented on, perhaps by one of the missionaries, but likely by a former owner.

14. The World, or, the Present State of the Universe, by Cavendish Pelham

London: J. Stratford, 1806-08
CM. 910.4 P3831806

Travel narratives became a popular literary genre in Early Modern Europe, often lushly illustrated with maps and images of exoticized foreign lands. This particular volume from 1806 is an excellent example of a compendium of travel narratives detailing different areas of the globe, and was likely acquired by the missionaries not simply because of its subject matter but because it was in English, a language they were desperate to learn as quickly as possible. Interestingly, there is no narrative or description of the United States in this volume. The book is open to the section on China, a country that would become incredibly important to American Vincentian missionary activity during the 20th century.

15. *Herodoti Halicarnassei Historiographi Libri Novem, Musarum Nominibus Inscripti*, by Herodotus and Konrad Heresbach [Cologne]: [Godefridi Hittorpii], 1537 SpC. 888 H559h1537

This edition of the ancient Greek historian Herodotus (c. 484 BCE-c. 425 BCE) contains both his *Histories* and his biography of the poet Homer. Published in 1537, it was already almost 300 years old at the time of their voyage to America. It contains commentary from Calvinist reformer, and friend of Renaissance humanist Erasmus of Rotterdam, Konrad Heresbach, and would have likely been used as an antiquarian book even in the early years of the 19th century, rather than as a reading copy. The page on display features beautiful woodcuts, including a large historiated initial and the figures of Roman statesman Marcus Agrippa and his daughter Agrippina.

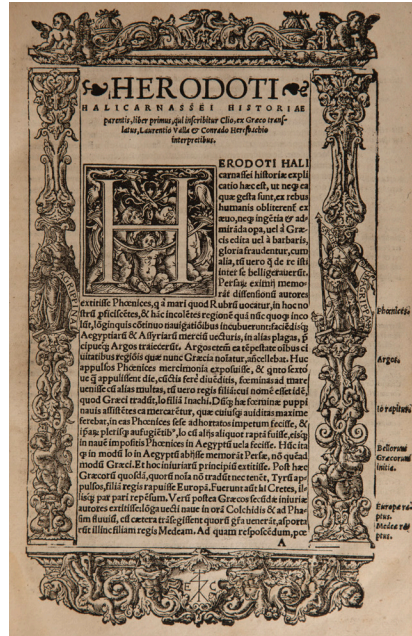


18.

22 *The Bicentennial Celebration of the Vincentians in America*

16. *Fables Choiesies*, by Jean de La Fontaine Paris: Chez l'Auteur, 1765-1775 CM. 841.4 L166F1765

This edition of the fables of Jean de La Fontaine is remarkable for its design. Each page is a separately engraved plate on which both the text and the illustrations were drawn. This was an incredibly time-consuming process used for expensive, decorative editions like this one. Fontaine (1621-1695) had first published his fables in the 17th century and dedicated them to the Grand Dauphin of Louis XIV. He drew from Aesop and other classical fabulists, the Indian *Panchatantra*, and other sources, eventually filling twelve volumes. These fables were considered classics of French children's literature, and the potential need to minister to children is likely the reason they were included in this library.



15.

17. *Les Incas: Ou la Destruction de l'Empire du Pérou*, by Jean-François Marmontel Paris: Lacombe, 1777 CM. 985.02 M3521777

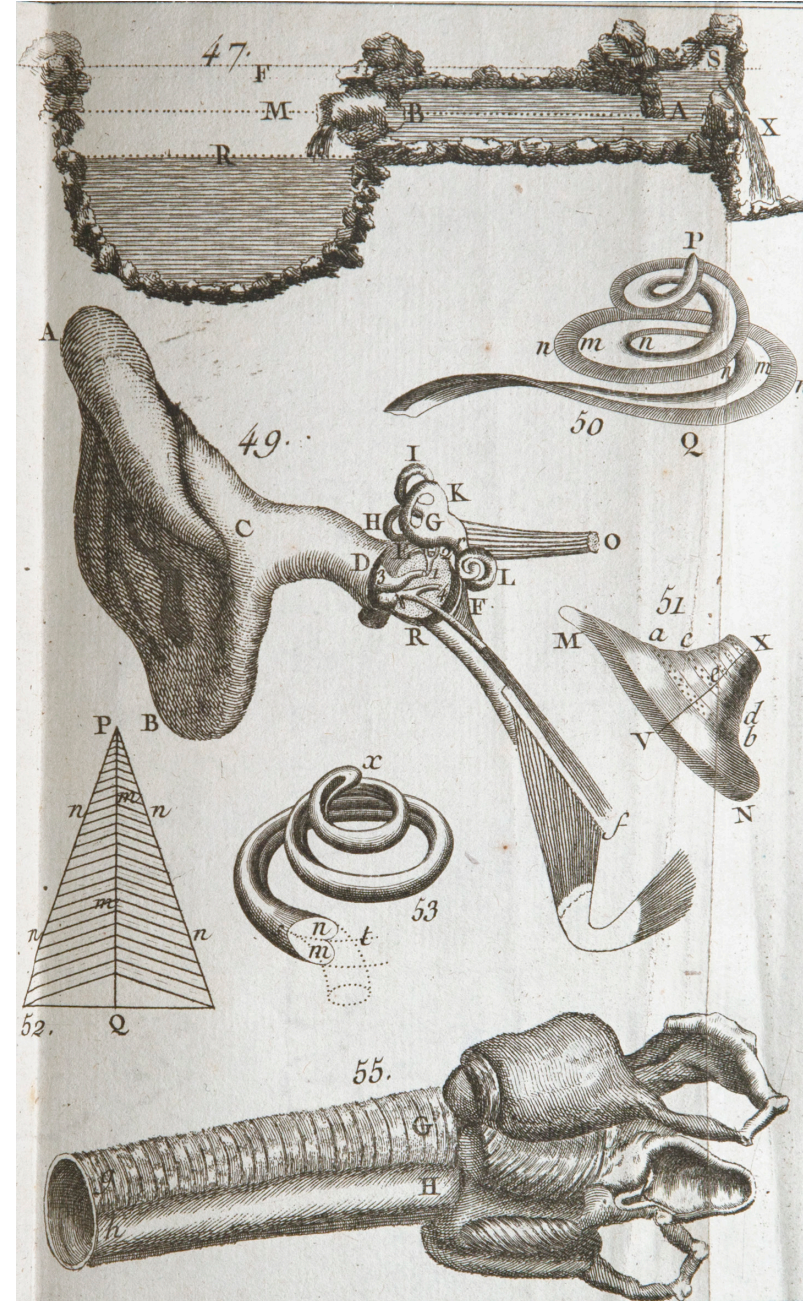
Both De Andreis and Rosati write separately about their desires to interact with and minister to indigenous peoples of America, and it is likely that this book was included in their library because of this interest. However, the book, which details the Spanish conquest beginning in 1529, has strongly anti-religious undertones. It is written by Jean-François Marmontel (1723-1799), one of the *encyclopédistes* who worked under Diderot and had previously written on religious tolerance, only to be censored by the Archbishop of Paris. *Les Incas* suggests that the brutality and bigotry displayed by the Spanish in their conquest is directly related to their religious fanaticism, which makes the title an interesting reading choice for 19th century missionaries.



16.

18. *Le Spectacle de la Nature: Ou, Entretiens sur les Particularités de l'Histoire Naturelle*, by Noël Antoine Pluche Paris: Veuve Estienne, 1735 CM. 508 P7331735

Books on plants, called botanicals, would be an important addition to any mission hoping to flourish in a rural region, as the American mission was to do. Most of the clerics in the De Andreis/Rosati party had little experience doing any kind of skilled labor, especially labor as complex as farming, and books were wonderful guides to such endeavors. Still, much of this sort of work would be done by the lay brothers of the company rather than the priests, who would be instructing seminarians and acting as administrators. On display is an illustration of corn (maize), which was certainly eaten in Europe, but which was a key crop in the United States.



22.

Detail

19. *The True Amazons, or the Monarchy of Bees*, by Joseph Warder London: John Pemberton, 1722 SpC. 638.1 W625t1722

Perhaps one would not expect a book about bees and beekeeping to be present in the library of Catholic missionaries to the United States, but this English title first published in 1712 is just that. It is quite possible that the Vincentians suspected they might keep bees at St. Mary's of the Barrens, as both a source of pollination for crops and a source of honey (with sugar being an expensive commodity). As is the case for many Enlightenment scientific treatises, the text utilizes scientific observation to inform a kind of moral evaluation of the subject. Warder was also a minister, and his opinion of bees is filtered through a religious lens. The displayed pages speak to the supposed motivations for bees robbing other hives.

20. *The Life of Dr. Benjamin Franklin*, by Benjamin Franklin Albany, NY: Barber & Southwick, 1797 SpC. 973.3092 F831L1797

The autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790) was first published in 1791, in French rather than English. This 1797 edition is a translation from that French edition. Franklin, as a Founding Father, inventor, and polymath, is representative of, along with figures like Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine, the American Enlightenment. This book could have been purchased or given to the missionaries upon their arrival in Baltimore as an example of American culture or politics, an English text to be used in learning the language, or both. It was certainly part of the collection at St. Mary's of the Barrens in 1866 when the building that housed the library caught fire, evidenced by the damaged pages.

21. *Opera Selecta*, by Augustine of Hippo. Cologne: Heronem Alopecium, 1527. CM. 270 A9231527

Published by Hero Fuchs in Cologne in 1527, this small edition of selected works by the Church Father Augustine (354-430) is the oldest book in the missionaries' library. Augustine's works are amongst the most important and influential in the whole of Christian history, and therefore would have been primary in the education of seminarians at St. Mary's. His views on slavery and free will helped mold the Western philosophies that informed the Enlightenment, but his positions on the denial of pleasure and original sin became favorite targets of anti-Christian eighteenth and nineteenth century thinkers.

22. *Théorie des Êtres Sensibles, ou, Cours Complet de Physique*, by François Para Du Phanjas Paris: Charles-Antoine Jombert, 1772 CM. 500 P2211772

French Jesuit François Para du Phanjas wrote this overview of Enlightenment scientific thought, covering topics like the workings of the human body, the study of plants and animals, and the theories of Isaac Newton. Enlightenment intellectuals did not differentiate between the sciences the way we do today, with fields like biology, physics, etc. clearly delineated. Instead, physical or natural phenomena were seen as part of the same system, the observation of which was called "natural philosophy." Natural philosophy, which preceded empirical science, had its beginnings with Aristotle, and during the Enlightenment the field most often included aspects of physics, chemistry, astronomy, and anatomy.

Vincent in America

Rev. John E. Rybolt, C.M.

As we mark two centuries since the first American-bound contingent of the Congregation of the Mission left the harbor in Bordeaux, arriving in Baltimore on July 26, 1816, we examine how and in what way Vincent de Paul arrived in America, embodied within the persons of those first Vincentians who set foot in the New World.

Who were these priests and brothers, the first to incarnate Vincent in America? They were Italians, not French, and this division in heritage reflects a conflict between Gallic and other European Vincentians that reaches back to the congregation's earliest days. Vincent was French; he founded his two congregations in France (the Vincentians and the Daughters of Charity), and both congregations' mother houses were in Paris. King Louis XIV insisted on the congregations' French identity, in the belief that he could not control either congregation if their leadership was other than French or if their headquarters lay outside his domains. The numerous early Italian and Polish Vincentians rightly felt aggrieved that the king's will could prevent one of their members from being elected superior general. Pope Clement XI sought to mollify them, ruling that anyone could be elected to the position, regardless of nationality. However, it took until 1947 for a non-French Vincentian, and 1991 for a non-French Daughter of Charity, to be elected to lead their congregations.

Unlike later Vincentian foundations in the Americas—including those in Brazil, Chile, Peru, and the republics of Central America—that strictly operated under French superiors, which sent their seminarians to France and used the French language, the Italian-born Vincentians who comprised the first American contingent were more adaptable to new situations. The flexible spirit these Vincentians developed outside of more rigid European structures was evident in their approach to parish missions, during which Vincentian priests visit local communities to perform pastoral duties and celebrate the sacraments, and instruct the people in their Christian duties. When French Vincentians criticized their American confreres for not following the traditional model of giving missions in local Catholic villages, the priests in America responded that they could not preach in the same way, as there were simply no villages in the area. This was certainly the case early in the nineteenth century.

The result of such divisions and differing approaches was that, as the first non-European Vincentian province, the American province developed its own culture and spirit. The French insisted on drinking wine for breakfast; the Americans were content with coffee. The French frowned on beer, but the Americans did not, as wine was considered a luxury import in the Americas. Spanish and Irish immigrants later added other flavors (both literal and figurative) to American Vincentian life.

The enormous problem that faced the early Italian pioneers in America was the enslavement of Africans. Before the founders left Rome, they agreed with their authorities to tacitly abide by the practice of slavery, and when they became reluctant slave owners themselves, to ensure that their slaves would be treated with equity, charity, and humanity. In addition to fairer treatment, they



would speak up for emancipation. In some respects, they were doing what Vincent de Paul had done in his own time: accepting the reality of injustice, working to end it, and aiding those treated unjustly. Lofty hopes for swift emancipation, however, faded in the face of reality.

Before their arrival in America, these Italian Vincentians dreamed of the New World, contemplating not only the evangelization of African slaves, but also the indigenous peoples. This was likewise more dream than reality, as the earliest American Vincentian foundations primarily served European settlers, while most Native American groups were moving, both forcedly and voluntarily, beyond the expanding boundaries of European control.

Evangelizing Protestants was more successful. The Vincentian pioneers were amazed to see fine and well-attended Protestant churches in America. Protestant settlers offered them hospitality on the frontier and were generally polite and kindly. Even better, as far as the Vincentians were concerned, many were open to discussing religion and possibly conversion.

The earliest American Vincentians had to adapt to new lifestyles as settlers: dressing differently than in Italy, eating and drinking differently, and laying aside inherited prejudices. The country's common spirit of independent thought and action, dissent, free enterprise, and progress infused the thinking of the members of the American congregation, even in those early years. Surprisingly, despite challenges in North America, by 1846 the Congregation of the Mission was the second largest religious community in the United States after the Jesuits.

The same need to adapt was apparent in early Vincentian ministries. The American Vincentians' first house was St. Mary's of the Barrens, now in Perryville, Missouri. In Italy, the Vincentians generally constructed large houses to accommodate clergy on retreats. In the United States, the pioneer clergy, often exhausted from long-distance ministerial trips, were few in number. Instead of adopting the Italian centralized retreat model, the Vincentians opened several regional seminaries.

Three seminaries dated from the Mission's earliest days in the Americas, and were located in Perryville, New Orleans, and Philadelphia. In 1842, John Timon, the first head of the American province, opened seminaries in New York, Cincinnati, and Bardstown, Kentucky. Six seminaries proved too many for one small province, so the seminaries were opened to boys pursuing secondary school studies. Diocesan officials hoped that the ensuing tuition dollars would support

the seminaries, and that the quality education and spiritual exercises afforded to the lay students would encourage new priestly vocations. These mixed institutions were unsuccessful, and the seminaries had only a fragile infrastructure with few Vincentians and little money.

In addition to the seminaries and schools, Vincentians staffed parishes as administrative units. Vincentians in Europe had few parishes, but in America, parishes became the nucleus of any religious foundation. A sustained focus on missions in the United States developed in the early twentieth century as many parishes began requesting them. Although Vincentian priests were expected to give these travelling missions, it entailed debilitating work. Difficult travel, undeveloped infrastructure and primitive accommodations, days and nights spent preaching, teaching, and hearing confessions, and visiting the sick and elderly was a ministry best suited to the young and healthy.

Success has blessed only some of the Vincentian endeavors in the United States, and the failure of others has spurred further adaptation. In recent years, as seminary enrollments decline, American Vincentians have focused on providing pastoral formation for clergy and laity, centered in parishes. These have varied in number, as the Vincentians have left some parishes and accepted others. The leading principle has been to incarnate Vincent de Paul's spirit, or charism, in these parishes. His concern for the poor and marginalized is the religious and pastoral key to Vincentian lives today.

The same perspective has grown in Vincentian universities. Known for their diversity in faculty and student body, they strive to encourage and welcome first generation college students to work for undergraduate and graduate education, and reach out to those unable to afford higher education. Vincentians understand education as a major route out of poverty, and they endeavor to make Vincent de Paul alive in all the members of the university communities.

A major Vincentian institutional theme in recent years has been a focus on strengthening networks both within and beyond the Congregation, engaging the multitudes that appreciate and venerate Vincentian charism, often called the Vincentian Family. These individuals and organizations incarnate Vincent in today's America and, like the early American Vincentians, help to unite people from diverse heritages for the common goal of spreading the charitable ideals of St. Vincent de Paul across the continent.



About

About the Exhibit

The exhibit *The Bicentennial Celebration of the Vincentians in America* opened at DePaul University's John T. Richardson Library in the fall of 2016, and featured two complementary installations: *God Alone as Compass, Rudder, and Pilot: The Missionary as a Pioneer*, which focuses on the journey of the first Vincentian missionaries to the United States, and *Knowledge and Salvation: The Missionary as a Man of the Enlightenment*, which explores highlights from the book collection of those missionaries.

The Bicentennial Celebration of the Vincentians in America is a collaborative effort between the DePaul University Library and DePaul's Office and Mission and Values. It features materials from DePaul's Vincentian Studies Collection and the DeAndreis Rosati Memorial Archives, as well as from both the St. Louis Archdiocesan Archives and the Vincentian Curia Archives in Rome, Italy. For more information about the Vincentian Studies Collection, please visit <http://libguides.depaul.edu/vincentianstudies>.

A digital version of *God Alone as Compass, Rudder, and Pilot* will be available for viewing. For more information, please visit the DePaul Special Collections website at <http://library.depaul.edu/special-collections>.

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qua et illae. epistolae
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deverantur (ab Ed.
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